

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION NATIONAL AUTHORITY

The entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) on April 29, 1997, set several processes in motion: the holding shortly thereafter of the First Conference of States Parties at the CWC international headquarters in The Hague (May 6-23, 1997); the selection on May 13, 1997 of José Mauricio Bustani of Brazil as the first Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW); the further staffing of the OPCW and the inception of the Executive Council (the CWC's policy body); the submission of states parties' Initial Declarations to the OPCW at the end of May 1997; and OPCW inspections of facilities declared according to the Convention's provisions.

The Canadian National Authority undertook a program of activities to ensure a timely and as complete as possible Canadian Initial Declaration to the OPCW. These activities included the distribution in early fall 1996 of draft Domestic Declaration forms and their associated draft regulations to domestic stakeholders. Thereafter, 4 000 Initial Domestic Declaration packages were distributed to potential domestic stakeholders. Regular consultations were held with National Defence officials. Federal and provincial law enforcement agencies also were surveyed.

Canada received its first Routine Inspection (Initial Inspection) at the end of September 1997, pursuant to its Declaration of a Single Small Scale Facility (SSSF) for chemical weapons defensive research, a legitimate activity under the CWC. The SSSF is owned and operated by the Department of National Defence at the Canadian Forces Base in Suffield, Alberta. The inspection was coordinated successfully by the National Authority, and the basis for a Facility Agreement with the OPCW was established.

Consultations on revisions to Canada's export and import controls also are under way as will be consultations on national licensing regulations for Schedule 1 Chemicals. As part of the consultation process, the Canadian National Authority is being advised on CWC implementation issues by an Industry Advisory Group (IAG) composed of representatives from major industry associations and companies, the Canadian National Authority's Scientific Advisor and Industry Canada. The IAG meets twice a year. Other outreach activities of the Canadian National Authority included maintenance of a Web site, attendance at industry functions and the publication of articles.

The Canadian National Authority maintained active relations with its counterparts in a number of other states parties. The National Authority also supported the Canadian delegation to the OPCW to ensure Canadian views on implementation issues were represented. Canada was represented by the Speaker of the Senate, the Honourable Gildas Molgat, as Head of Delegation at the First Conference of States Parties. Canada was among the first states parties at this Conference to pledge a contribution to